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Transcript of Public Hearing

Date: November 6, 2019

Case: Public Hearing for Bradmoor Sidewalk Proposal

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY

IN RE: :
PUBLIC HEARING FOR :
BRADMOOR SIDEWALK PROPOSAL :

Recorded Hearing
Rockville, Maryland
Wednesday, November 6, 2019
7:08 p.m.

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Transcript of Public Hearing
Conducted on November 6, 2019

1 Recorded Hearing held pursuant to
2 agreement, before Jonathan Bortolini, Notary
3 Public of the State of Maryland, at 8701 Hartsdale
4 Avenue, Bethesda, Maryland, 20817.

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 MR. PAYLOR: This is Wednesday,
3 November the 6th, 2019 and the time is about 7:10
4 p.m. We're assembled in the all purpose room of
5 the Bradley Hills Elementary School located at
6 8701 Hartsdale Avenue in Bethesda, Maryland, 218
7 -- excuse me, 20817.

8 My name is Michael Paylor, designee at
9 this hearing for the Montgomery County Department
10 of Transportation. Here with me this evening to
11 conduct this public hearing is Mr. Tim Cupples,
12 chief of the Division of Transportation and
13 Engineering for the Montgomery County Department
14 of Transportation and Mr. Frank Kingsley who is
15 the manager of the Annual Sidewalk Program in the
16 Division of Transportation Engineering.

17 Mr. Cupples will be providing the
18 information and details associated with the
19 proposed project. Tonight we're broadcasting this
20 hearing over the Internet. Audio and video of
21 this hearing is being recorded and may be posted
22 online after the conclusion of this hearing.

23 I hope everyone in attendance this
24 evening signed in when you entered the room and
25 noted on the sign-in sheet whether or not you wish

1 to present oral testimony. If you have indicated
2 that you do not wish to speak but change your mind
3 at any time during the hearing there will be an
4 opportunity to speak at the end.

5 Written comments can be submitted as
6 well and will be considered with the same weight
7 as oral testimony. If you have not signed in yet
8 please do so before leaving this evening. Thank
9 you. This hearing is being held pursuant to
10 section 4953 of the Montgomery County Code.

11 The purpose of a public hearing is to
12 obtain comments on the potential project to assist
13 in determining if the project is in the best
14 interests of the public and whether or not it
15 should be authorized for construction in its
16 entirety or any portion thereof.

17 This forum allows you to provide
18 comments either in support for or in opposition to
19 the project. Your comments should be focused
20 entirely on the project which is the topic of
21 discussion. All interested persons are entitled
22 to be heard at this hearing.

23 However, this is not a forum for
24 dialogue, questions and answers or
25 cross-examination. Please direct your remarks to

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1 the specific project that is the subject of this
2 hearing. If comments stray into areas not related
3 to this project I will ask you to refocus your
4 comments to the subject project.

5 Following the conclusion of this public
6 hearing this record will remain open for three
7 weeks. The length of time the record remains open
8 and the official closing date will be announced at
9 the end of this hearing as well. The record will
10 remain open during this time to allow any person
11 who is unable to attend the hearing an opportunity
12 to have their comments included in the public
13 record and fully considered.

14 Submissions may be faxed, E-mailed or
15 sent via regular mail and must be received or
16 postmarked by the close of the hearing record.
17 Written submissions will be considered with the
18 same weight as oral testimony. These submissions
19 should be sent to Lori Main who is up front
20 operating the webcam this evening. Lori's contact
21 information is available at the sign-in desk as
22 you enter the room and will be repeated at the
23 conclusion of the hearing.

24 After the hearing is concluded and the
25 record is officially closed I, as the hearing

1 officer, will review and weigh all the information
2 submitted into the public record and make a
3 recommendation to the director of the Department
4 of Transportation, Chris Conklin, for his final
5 decision as to whether the project has been shown
6 to be in the best public interest and whether or
7 not to authorize the project as proposed or any
8 portions thereof.

9 And now to discuss the sidewalk
10 proposal for Hempstead Avenue, McKinley Street,
11 Madison Street, Folkstone Road and Ewing Drive I
12 give you Tim Cupples.

13 MR. CUPPLES: Good evening, Mr. Paylor,
14 Mr. Kingsley, ladies and gentlemen. The subject
15 of this evening's public hearing is to consider a
16 proposal to construct a five-foot wide concrete
17 sidewalk on the following roadways: The east side
18 of Ewing Drive from Bradley Boulevard to McKinley
19 Street, the south side of Madison Street from
20 Irvington Avenue to Hartsdale Avenue, the south
21 side of Folkstone Road from Ewing Drive to
22 Irvington Avenue, the west side of Hempstead
23 Avenue from McKinley Street to Roosevelt Street,
24 the east side of Hempstead Avenue from McKinley
25 Street to the existing sidewalk at the

1 intersection of Hartsdale Avenue, and the south
2 side of McKinley Street from Rayburn Road to
3 Garfield Street.

4 The project as proposed is to construct
5 a five-foot wide concrete sidewalk with a variable
6 green space of zero to three feet. For your
7 convenience we've provided a few displays that aid
8 in the visual description of the project. They
9 are display A, the project vicinity map showing
10 the location of the proposed sidewalks relative to
11 nearby pedestrian attractions such as schools,
12 parks, public transportation and the existing
13 network of sidewalks.

14 The proposed sidewalk is shown in red
15 and the existing sidewalks in blue. The total
16 length of new sidewalk construction is
17 approximately 3,511 total linear feet. Display B
18 is a typical section of the proposed sidewalk on
19 McKinley Street which has 50 feet of public right
20 of way, the roadway being 23.5 feet wide. Thus,
21 there is approximately 13.25 feet of public right
22 of way available on either side of McKinley
23 Street.

24 Display C is a typical section of the
25 proposed sidewalk on Hempstead Avenue which has 60

1 feet of public right of way, the roadway being 26
2 feet wide. Thus, there is approximately 17 feet
3 of public right of way available on either side of
4 Hempstead Avenue. Display D is a typical section
5 of the proposed sidewalk on Folkstone Road which
6 has 60 feet of public right of way, the roadway
7 being 26 feet wide.

8 Thus, there is approximately 17 feet of
9 public right of way available on either side of
10 Folkstone Road. Display E is a typical section of
11 the proposed sidewalk on Ewing Drive which has 60
12 feet of public right of way, the roadway being 36
13 feet wide. Thus, there is approximately 12 feet
14 of public right of way available on either side of
15 Ewing Drive.

16 Display F is a typical section of the
17 proposed sidewalk on Madison Street which has 50
18 feet of public right of way, the roadway being 26
19 feet wide. Thus, there is approximately 12 feet
20 of public right of way available on either side of
21 Madison Street.

22 I will now discuss the project
23 justification. Montgomery County DOT evaluates
24 requests for pedestrian facilities based on their
25 ability to serve a public use as well as their

1 ability to enhance public safety. The main goal
2 for installing a sidewalk is to remove pedestrians
3 from the path of vehicular traffic and create a
4 separation between the pedestrian and the roadway.

5 New sidewalks on Hempstead Avenue,
6 McKinley Street, Folkstone Road, Ewing Drive and
7 Madison Street will remove pedestrians as well as
8 disabled persons from the roadway. The sidewalk
9 will establish safer access to all areas of the
10 community including to the Bradley Hills
11 Elementary School, Suburban Hospital, local
12 parklands, community centers, gardens and
13 churches, middle and high schools and public
14 transportation.

15 Pedestrian safety will be improved for
16 the entire Bradmoor and Huntington Terrace
17 Communities. I will now discuss tree removal and
18 replacement. Removal of 32 trees in varying size
19 is anticipated to facilitate the construction of
20 this entire project. Ninety-six trees will be
21 planted to replace those removed. Placement of
22 the new trees is selected by the county's
23 arborist.

24 The tree protection report can be
25 viewed in the record binder at the sign-in table

1 under Exhibit Number 5. Copies of the tree
2 protection report were mailed to residents on
3 April 22nd, 2019. I will now discuss the cost and
4 assessments of the project. The estimated cost
5 for installing this entire project is \$513,051.

6 This includes construction, inspection
7 and administrative costs. Funding for this
8 project will be provided under the county's Annual
9 Sidewalk Program, CIP project number 0506747.

10 There are no properties which are considered to be
11 specially benefitted by the proposed improvement.
12 Therefore, no properties are expected to be
13 assessed.

14 I will now review the exhibits. As
15 previously discussed, there are several exhibits
16 that are incorporated into the public record
17 binder for your information and consideration.
18 The exhibits are located in the black binder
19 located by the sign-in table by Mrs. Main's
20 contact information.

21 The exhibits include 1, Office of
22 Management and Budget sidewalk program minor
23 projects, project 506747, project location maps,
24 construction impacts, cost estimates, arborist's
25 tree evaluation report for all proposed streets,

1 traffic study results for Ewing Drive, proof of
2 publication from the Washington Post and
3 Montgomery County DOT's Go Montgomery Press
4 Release each advertising this public hearing,
5 correspondence and comments forms from those
6 supporting the proposed sidewalk, correspondence
7 and comment forms from those opposing the proposed
8 sidewalks, the public hearing sign-in sheet which
9 will be added following this hearing and the
10 hearing transcript will also be added following
11 this hearing.

12 The project related data and files have
13 been available for examination in the offices of
14 Montgomery County DOT located on the 4th floor of
15 the public safety building, 100 Edison Park Drive,
16 Gaithersburg, Maryland, 20878. The files will
17 continue to be available to the public until the
18 record for this public hearing is officially
19 closed.

20 These files are available for review by
21 contacting the Annual Sidewalk Program at
22 240-777-7270 and making an appointment. If the
23 proposed sidewalks are approved MCDOT will utilize
24 a work order contract currently in place with the
25 Division of Transportation and Engineering to

1 construct the sidewalk.

2 If the project is authorized we expect
3 construction in the spring of 2020. The
4 construction is anticipated to take approximately
5 six weeks to complete if authorized as presented.
6 As previously stated here with us this evening is
7 Mr. Frank Kingsley, manager of the Annual Sidewalk
8 Program. He will be available after the hearing
9 to answer any questions regarding the construction
10 aspects of the project, and I will turn things
11 back over to Mr. Paylor.

12 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Cupples.
13 We will now hear comments from those in attendance
14 who wish to testify. Please clearly provide your
15 name and address for the record prior to beginning
16 your testimony. Because of the significant
17 interest in this project and the number of
18 attendees at this hearing who wish to speak it
19 will be necessary to enforce a three-minute time
20 limit for every testimony.

21 I'm requesting that all presentations
22 taking longer than three minutes be summarized so
23 as to comply with the time constraints and provide
24 a full written testimony to submit into the
25 record. These submissions will be fully

1 considered along with the oral testimony heard
2 here today. Jeff Wolven. And please announce
3 your name and address --

4 MR. WOLVEN: Yep.

5 MR. PAYLOR: -- before you begin your
6 testimony. Thank you.

7 MR. WOLVEN: Yep. So my legal name is
8 actually William Wolven. I go by Jeff. That's my
9 middle name. I live at 8605 Ewing, and I moved to
10 8605 July of last year. I moved there from
11 Massachusetts Avenue, 6014 Massachusetts Avenue
12 where my family witnessed the death of an
13 individual hit by a car on Mass Ave, and if you
14 look at the records of what happened it wasn't
15 speeding, it was just a guy fell asleep at the
16 wheel, hit the guy.

17 So I have a seven and a nine year old
18 who I watch walk to school daily -- my nine year
19 old. I drive my seven year old, and I watch
20 children come down that street daily. As the
21 neighborhood continues to evolve and grow we see
22 more and more children moving into the
23 neighborhood, and to me that's a huge concern, so
24 whether it's a sidewalk or additional safety
25 concerns that's what I would hope to get out of

1 this today. That's it.

2 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Syed Estem
3 Dadul Islam.

4 MR. ISLAM: Thank you. Good night.
5 Well, I support this project in front of --

6 MR. PAYLOR: I'm sorry, sir. Please
7 state your name and your address, please.

8 MR. ISLAM: I'm sorry. My name is Syed
9 Estem Dadul Islam. I recently moved to this
10 house. I bought this house four months back, and
11 I have two little kids who comes to this school
12 and I moved from Potomac last year -- this year,
13 but I was living in Potomac.

14 So I support this project, a lot of --
15 I mean, I have two kids, and I see especially the
16 road I live the cars come with a high speed and
17 it's a security concern, and I think if we have a
18 sidewalk it will increase security of the walker.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Bill
21 Wakefield.

22 MR. WAKEFIELD: My name is Bill
23 Wakefield. I live on 6002 Pelham Place, and I've
24 lived here about 13 years. There are no sidewalks
25 within several streets of ours and my children

1 walk to school sometimes and it is very dangerous.
2 In fact, last week both my son and I almost got
3 hit by somebody dropping their -- driving their
4 kid to one of the local houses to -- for a day
5 care, and it's very dangerous.

6 We're always looking head on to swivel
7 trying to look around making sure that we're not
8 hit or we're making sure we're wearing bright
9 clothing, and there's -- it's a challenge,
10 especially on McKinley which is a very busy
11 street. It has a lot of -- it cuts right through
12 the neighborhood, and for a lot of that traffic on
13 McKinley there's nowhere for children to go.

14 In addition to almost being hit, I've
15 almost hit other people as well because if you're
16 driving right into the sun, east/west, in that
17 direction you can't see sometimes, and if kids are
18 riding their bikes or things like that it can be
19 problematic.

20 So I've seen it many times where people
21 are -- there's close calls, people of a variety of
22 ages, not just children. There's adults, there's
23 people of every age who, you know, often you're
24 taking your life in your own hands and people
25 aren't necessarily obeying the speed limits,

1 they're not necessarily stopping at stop signs.

2 And so you're always concerned, is
3 somebody who is not paying attention or texting or
4 whatever, are they going to be, you know, not
5 paying attention and sideswipe me or something, so
6 it's always been a concern and at least the
7 sidewalks will provide that much greater a level
8 of safety. Thank you.

9 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. D'Angelo
10 (sic). Charlotte McDowell.

11 MS. MCDOWELL: Hello. Can you hear me?

12 MR. PAYLOR: Yes.

13 MS. MCDOWELL: Hi. My name is
14 Charlotte McDowell. This is Emily, and I just
15 wanted to say that for me there's three reasons
16 why I support the sidewalks. I live at the corner
17 of Irvington and McKinley, and the first is
18 safety.

19 There's a bus stop on that corner and
20 there's about 12 middle school kids who catch that
21 bus every day. When the weather is bad sometimes
22 they don't want to stand on the grass and so they
23 stand in the street and they run to catch the bus
24 in the street and we see it every day, so I think
25 there's a particular need on McKinley.

1 Second of all, just to get here tonight
2 I had a choice of walking one block in the dark in
3 the middle of the street with two kids or of
4 getting in a car, which seems like an
5 environmentally not sound choice between my safety
6 and the environment.

7 And third I think health. I think a
8 lot of people walk in the neighborhood. I think a
9 lot of people would like to ride bikes in the
10 neighborhood or run in the neighborhood, and if we
11 had a safe way to do that I think people would be
12 more physically active. Thank you.

13 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. And as a
14 reminder when you approach the desk and take the
15 microphone please restate your name and your
16 address for us for the record. Thank you. Okay.
17 Nina Ghamarian. I'm sorry.

18 MS. GHAMARIAN: Ghamarian.

19 MR. PAYLOR: Ghamarian. I missed a
20 syllable or two.

21 MS. GHAMARIAN: That's okay. Hi. Nina
22 Ghamarian, 6017 Bradley Boulevard. I'm a dentist
23 there. It's a home office. I've been there for
24 22 years and the practice has been there since
25 1960, and the only thing that concerns me is the

1 construction.

2 I have patients from age 2 to all the
3 way to 103. They use a wheelchair and walkers,
4 and I just want to know how long the construction
5 -- I know you can't answer right now, but I think
6 that would interrupt my office, so I'm against it
7 for that reason. Okay?

8 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

9 MS. GHAMARIAN: Because I think it will
10 interrupt the walkers and, you know, different
11 people coming in.

12 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Nina. Ruth
13 Sokolove.

14 MS. SOKOLOVE: I decline.

15 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. John Bree.

16 MS. SOKOLOVE: There's Howard Sokolove.

17 MR. PAYLOR: Excuse me?

18 MS. SOKOLOVE: Howard Sokolove.

19 MR. PAYLOR: Oh, I see. Okay. We'll
20 let John come up and then I'll grab Howard. Thank
21 you.

22 MR. BREE: Good evening, gentlemen and
23 lady. I do have a few visuals.

24 MR. PAYLOR: John, do you mind grabbing
25 the mic towards you?

1 MR. BREE: Good evening. My name is
2 John Bree. I do have a few visuals for you guys
3 tonight. Should I hand them out over there?

4 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

5 MR. BREE: All right. As I said, my
6 name is John Bree. I sit on the Huntington
7 Terrace board, and I'm here tonight to speak on
8 behalf of the Huntington Terrace Citizens
9 Association.

10 I am joined by my wife Maggie who is
11 the neighborhood board copresident and fellow
12 board member David Shiff and several other
13 concerned neighbors, and I noticed on the sign-in
14 sheet it said the Bradmoor sidewalk project and if
15 it simply pertained to Bradmoor I wouldn't be here
16 tonight.

17 But -- so to be clear I'm only
18 addressing the portion of this project that
19 impacts Huntington Terrace, specifically the
20 proposal for a sidewalk on McKinley Street between
21 Garfield and Hempstead. In January of this year
22 the Huntington Terrace citizens voted unanimously
23 against the construction of the sidewalk.

24 Neighbors cited their growing
25 frustration with the destruction and loss of our

1 beloved trees, as well as the fact that we already
2 have a safe route parallel to the proposed
3 sidewalk to access Bradley Hills Elementary and
4 neighboring communities. So I ask, we ask that
5 you respect our community vote and not ignore it
6 tonight.

7 My wife grew up in Huntington Terrace
8 on the corner of McKinley and Jefferson Street. I
9 promised my wife I wouldn't tell her age, so let's
10 just say over 30 years ago she attended Bradley
11 Hills, and every morning and every afternoon her
12 and her friends walked to and from this very
13 school where we are right now.

14 For decades children in our
15 neighborhood have walked to school on the paved
16 throughway that connects Garfield and Hempstead
17 Street. Today our neighbors still agree that this
18 route is the safest route to and from Bradley
19 Hills and east/west through the neighborhood.

20 One of the visuals I brought with me, I
21 think it's Exhibit 1, is a map which demonstrates
22 all the ways the children in Huntington Terrace
23 can safely get to Bradley Hills. You will notice
24 none of those pathways involve the stretch of
25 pavement proposed on McKinley Street.

1 The proposed sidewalk is parallel to
2 our current walkway and is unnecessary in reaching
3 our shared goals of safety and accessibility.
4 What all these paths do have in common is the
5 wonderful and safe pathway that connects the
6 intersection of Garfield, Madison and Jefferson
7 directly to the back of Bradley Hills Elementary.

8 To be clear this is the pathway all
9 kids have been encouraged to take not only because
10 it is the safest -- it is -- but because it is
11 also the most convenient, and about 12 years ago
12 you worked with us to make this intersection even
13 safer with a stop sign. Thank you. Additionally,
14 there is a safety patrol station there for morning
15 and afternoon walkers.

16 MR. PAYLOR: You have about 20 seconds,
17 John.

18 MR. BREE: Thank you. The second
19 visual I brought is a photo or really two photos
20 of what the pathway looks like today. As you can
21 see, there are no vehicles allowed on the pathway
22 and you cannot get any safer than a pathway with
23 no vehicles.

24 Finally, I'll talk about the cost.
25 I've heard multiple numbers being thrown around

1 regarding the cost of this endeavor. Whatever the
2 final numbers come out to be I'm telling you, we
3 are telling you, Huntington Terrace, for our
4 county government practicing operational and
5 financial efficiency this is not the most
6 efficient use of our tax payer dollars.

7 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

8 MR. BREE: Thank you guys very much. I
9 can submit the rest of that.

10 MR. PAYLOR: Okay. Submit that.
11 Great.

12 MR. BREE: I will. Thank you.

13 MR. PAYLOR: Howard Sokolove.

14 MR. SOKOLOVE: Good evening, and thank
15 you for this opportunity to comment. My name is
16 Howard Sokolove, and I reside in the Bethesda
17 neighborhood of Huntington Terrace at 5600 Lincoln
18 Street. I support the construction of sidewalks
19 for safe passage for our children to and from
20 school and the sidewalks should be placed clearly
21 where needed.

22 With the proposal at issue in this
23 hearing the eastern half of McKinley Street
24 between Hempstead to the west and Garfield Street
25 to the east is a location for a safe passage to

1 school. The sidewalk is not necessary. Testimony
2 will be given here soon that shows that the
3 Bradley Hills school access is on Madison Street,
4 the pathway between Hempstead and Garfield
5 Streets.

6 The McKinley Street proposed location
7 is excessive and costly. Sidewalk construction
8 occurs in county right of ways. Trees are also
9 frequently found in right of ways and the two are
10 often in conflict for coexistence. While
11 individual trees may typically exist in front of a
12 single detached residence, they are really shared
13 community assets.

14 They provide tangible benefits that
15 contribute to the quality of life, they absorb air
16 and water pollution, they abate noise pollution,
17 they provide shade and energy conservation, even
18 add to property values and add immeasurably to a
19 sense of well-being. Typically big trees provide
20 more benefits and are more valuable.

21 Big trees may take many decades to get
22 so. Many are not replaceable. Even with
23 Montgomery County's, quote, remove one/get three
24 new ones planted, end quote, program for the
25 removal of a big tree having had a long-term

1 presence within our community this is clearly a
2 false equivalency of value.

3 MR. PAYLOR: About 30 seconds, sir.

4 MR. SOKOLOVE: In my reading of certain
5 correspondence from DOT's Division of
6 Transportation and Engineering office I come up on
7 the routinely repeated testament please know the
8 county does not take tree removal lightly.

9 When I place that statement in context
10 with the number of medium and large trees proposed
11 for removal for new sidewalks the county's lament
12 rings hollow and is about as sincere as a wartime
13 naval commander's order of damn the torpedoes, full
14 steam ahead.

15 There's clearly room for creative
16 problem solving here as well as the use of
17 alternative methods and materials for resolution
18 of these sidewalk tree conflicts. Sidewalk safe
19 passage is important and our neighborhood trees
20 are part of our homes and our solace. They
21 deserve far greater respect and consideration.

22 Thank you.

23 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, sir. Tom
24 Kevorkian.

25 MR. KEVORKIAN: Good evening. I'm Tom

1 Kevorkian. I'm a 10-year resident of 8609
2 Hempstead Avenue. I'm here to support the
3 initiative. My eloquent neighbors have
4 articulated many of the concerns related to
5 Bradley Hills Elementary School.

6 We have children who no longer are at
7 Bradley Hills but shared those similar concerns
8 related to sun glare, related to cars along the
9 Hempstead Avenue area, so it's difficult because
10 there's a lot of blind spots so not having the
11 benefit of a sidewalk was a challenge.

12 However, my two largest concerns are,
13 one, the bad news is we all age and the idea of
14 walking around streets in my 60s and 70s, and I
15 intend to have our family here for quite a while,
16 is a frightening prospect, and I just don't think
17 it's good public policy and I'm concerned that's a
18 safety impediment for those of us who are aging
19 who want to have -- and go visit our friends in
20 the nearby neighborhood to be walking in the
21 streets.

22 My second concern is during several of
23 the snowstorms there are very, very difficult
24 challenges. When all the cars are in the streets
25 and whether it's three inches or a foot with snow

1 removal and not having the benefit of the
2 sidewalks is reckless, dangerous, and we're asking
3 for trouble. Thank you.

4 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. PAYLOR: Michael Pryor.

7 MR. PRYOR: Do you mind if we -- Linda
8 Hirsch precedes me and then I'll follow?

9 MR. PAYLOR: By all means.

10 MS. HIRSCH: Linda Hirsch and Karen de
11 Guise.

12 MR. PAYLOR: Okay. The trifecta,
13 please.

14 MS. HIRSCH: Good evening. I'm Linda
15 Hirsch of 8601 Ewing Drive.

16 MS. DE GUISE: And I'm Karen de Guise
17 of 8613 Ewing Drive.

18 MS. HIRSCH: Together with my son who
19 is co-owner of 8601 we co-authored our written
20 submission to the county. We will each take three
21 minutes.

22 MS. DE GUISE: You can start the clock
23 now. All right. We are deeply respectful of the
24 aesthetic and ecological preferences of some
25 fellow homeowners who wish to protect treasured

1 and valuable trees. We think those preferences
2 are obviously entitled to consideration, but we
3 think many or most of us will agree that the
4 paramount consideration for sidewalk placement
5 should be safety, particularly safety of children,
6 our children.

7 It is precisely because locating a
8 sidewalk on the east side of Ewing Drive will not
9 promote safety that is proposed. Proposals should
10 be rejected. Indeed, the irony is that the
11 sidewalk might inadvertently create a setting
12 which is manifestly less safe. It is thus
13 important that an east side of Ewing sidewalk not
14 be constructed.

15 In order for a sidewalk to promote
16 pedestrian safety there must first be a critical
17 mass of pedestrians to protect. As detailed in
18 our written submission earlier this summer
19 anecdotal experience shows that there are almost
20 no pedestrians using this segment of Ewing Drive.

21 However, in an effort to be more
22 scientific Linda and her son conducted a
23 pedestrian study during the times the children
24 would be most likely to be walking to and from
25 school. I won't reiterate in detail the findings,

1 but in summary the average number of pedestrians
2 per hour was 2.5 and no children walking to or
3 from Bradley Hills were observed.

4 So a first reason a sidewalk should not
5 be sided on this segment of Ewing Drive is that
6 there are not material pedestrians to use it.
7 Yes, I recognize some might say if you build it
8 they will come approach to a sidewalk, but that is
9 not, we suggest, a smart or prudent use of scarce
10 county resources.

11 For whatever reason a workable
12 pedestrian flow has developed which does not
13 entail substantial use of the segment of Ewing
14 Drive, particularly by school age children. There
15 is no reason to seek to attract pedestrians to
16 this segment of the road, particularly because of
17 the safety hazards which would be caused by an
18 east side of Ewing sidewalk.

19 MS. HIRSCH: The Ewing Drive segment on
20 which a sidewalk is being considered for
21 construction has not one but two unusual
22 intersections, both of which objectively create
23 more danger for a pedestrian who must navigate
24 them than a traditional 90 degree, 4 corners
25 intersection.

1 These may literally be the two most
2 dangerous intersections in all of the Bradmoor
3 neighborhood. While a pedestrian can avoid both
4 intersections by simply walking up or down the
5 west side of Ewing from Bradley to McKinley, no
6 sidewalk has been proposed for the west side.

7 Rather, the sidewalk proposed for the
8 east side of Ewing Drive actually funnels
9 pedestrians through both of these hazardous
10 intersections. Thus, contrary to the goal of
11 enhancing public safety this design is objectively
12 more dangerous than the west side of Ewing and may
13 well be more dangerous than no sidewalk all things
14 considered.

15 Time limits prohibit me from describing
16 these intersections in necessary detail, but the
17 first intersection at Ewing and Roosevelt is
18 essentially little more than a fork in the road.
19 Because of this it is not unusual for traffic
20 heading down Ewing to just barrel right through
21 the intersection onto Roosevelt.

22 Even traffic coming off Roosevelt
23 customarily makes at best a California stop
24 essentially just proceeding at maybe a slightly
25 slower speed right through the intersection, and

1 the second intersection at Ewing and McKinley has
2 a steep grade that only levels off a house or so
3 before the intersection.

4 While this intersection has a traffic
5 circle the bad sight lines still cause
6 unquestionable hazards to those on foot who must
7 cross the circle, and here's the irony. If one
8 just walks up the west side of Ewing a pedestrian
9 would avoid both of these hazardous intersections,
10 but directing pedestrians to the east side of
11 Ewing forces them through both of these
12 intersections.

13 Obviously the vast majority of
14 pedestrian accidents versus car accidents occur at
15 intersections. Why then would we channel
16 pedestrians into the two worst intersections in
17 the area? That clearly defies safety. Please do
18 not in the name of safety create a more hazardous
19 pedestrian flow.

20 Finally, both the Bradmoor association
21 and the Department of Transportation have
22 generally respected the views of neighbors most
23 impacted by a sidewalk and not sided a sidewalk
24 where neighbors oppose it. For example, as to a
25 Hempstead segment a majority of the west side

1 homeowners supported a west side sidewalk while a
2 majority of east side homeowners opposed an east
3 side sidewalk.

4 Thus, the association supported only a
5 sidewalk on the west side and ultimately that was
6 married in the DOT proposal. Here a majority of
7 east side homeowners oppose installation of a
8 sidewalk. This view should be respected as it
9 has been elsewhere.

10 MR. PAYLOR: You've got about 30
11 seconds.

12 MS. HIRSCH: Sidewalks can promote
13 safety. I'm almost done. This sidewalk would not
14 and might even create a more dangerous flow of
15 pedestrians than no sidewalk at all. Given the
16 lack of pedestrians to justify any sidewalks the
17 manifest hazardousness of the east side
18 intersections and the lack of support from most of
19 the impacted homeowners the Ewing Drive segment of
20 this sidewalk project should not be pursued.
21 Thank you so much.

22 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

23 MS. DE GUISE: Thank you.

24 MR. PAYLOR: Michael Pryor.

25 MR. PRYOR: Yes, thank you. Michael

1 Pryor. I live on the east side of Ewing at 8513
2 Ewing Drive, and I support and echo the remarks
3 that you just heard from my neighbors, but I do --
4 I want to highlight a couple of points. One is
5 the amount of opposition to this, those residents
6 most directly affected by the east side sidewalk,
7 those living on the east side.

8 Of the nine comments that I saw from
9 those residents seven were opposed and only two
10 supported, and on the other side of the street on
11 the west side even there the majority opposed
12 this, so I would hope that you would take into
13 account, you know, the extent of opposition to
14 this.

15 And I'd also want to say I'm not
16 unsympathetic to the concerns of those with
17 children here, and -- but the concern we have is
18 we're not really increasing potential safety here
19 for the reasons you just heard. An east side
20 sidewalk has two problems. One is it funnels, as
21 she said, funnels folks into these very dangerous
22 intersections.

23 And if you're living sort of in the
24 middle of the block, say between McKinley and
25 Pelham or McKinley and Roosevelt, in order to get

1 to those intersections you're either going to
2 cross in the middle of the street, which is not
3 safe, or you're going to end up walking on the
4 street anyway on your side, so I don't see that
5 the east sidewalk proposal here actually increases
6 safety very much at all.

7 And finally I'd just say that there may
8 be better ways to spend scarce federal -- or
9 scarce county dollars than to construct a sidewalk
10 here where, one, it doesn't seem to be terribly
11 needed in light of the light number -- light
12 amount of traffic and the -- I think the sort of
13 really lack of safety enhancements that would come
14 with this, so thank you very much.

15 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. James
16 Goldberg.

17 MR. GOLDBERG: Thank you. My name is
18 James Goldberg. I live at 8506 Hempstead Avenue
19 in Bethesda. I wanted to raise a couple of
20 issues. Until somebody made the comment just a
21 few minutes ago I didn't understand the logic in
22 the proposal about putting the sidewalk on the
23 west side of Hempstead between Roosevelt and
24 McKinley and then switching to the east side from
25 McKinley heading northward toward the school.

1 The logic seems to be that's a vote of
2 the people on the street. With all due respect to
3 my neighbors, some of whom are here and some of
4 whom have voted one way or the other, I think if
5 we're talking about a safety issue I would prefer
6 to have the sidewalks all on one side of the
7 street, west or east, from Roosevelt all the way
8 to the school.

9 It makes no sense to me on a -- from a
10 safety point of view to have to cross -- make two
11 crossings at the corner of Hempstead and McKinley,
12 one to get from the south side to the north side
13 and the other one to get from the west side to the
14 east side.

15 Second of all, with regard to the tree
16 issue, while I share the concern about removal of
17 the trees I would note that the proposal makes
18 comments like we may replace the trees and we may
19 -- we give you a three for one replacement for
20 every tree removed, but there's no guarantee and
21 no pledge that the trees will be placed in the
22 same neighborhood on the same streets where they
23 are removed from, so I think that's an important
24 thing to keep in mind.

25 Lastly, and I know this hearing is only

1 focused on sidewalks, but it seems to me if the
2 proposal is going to go forward I would hope that
3 there would be a recommendation to the Department
4 of Transportation that this not be the end of it,
5 that there be other safety measures looked at to
6 ensure the safety of people walking through the
7 neighborhood, more crosswalks, more signs that say
8 state law requires people to stop in crosswalks,
9 more stop signs --

10 MR. PAYLOR: I'm sorry. Let's please
11 focus on what -- the issues here at hand at the
12 hearing, please. Thank you.

13 MR. GOLDBERG: All right. That's -- I
14 made my point. Thank you.

15 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Jed Meline or
16 Meline, I apologize.

17 MR. MELINE: Good evening. My name is
18 Jed Meline, and I live at 8709 Irvington Avenue.
19 I was a past and founding president of the
20 Bradmoor Neighborhood Association serving for more
21 than three years and I've lived here for almost
22 ten years now.

23 When I served as president of the
24 neighborhood association two concerns were
25 regularly raised to me in almost every

1 conversation I had. One was traffic concerns,
2 which the county has made many great steps to
3 address -- thank you -- and adding sidewalks.

4 Obviously everyone who lives in our
5 neighborhood would like a liveable, walkable
6 neighborhood. I think it's important to note that
7 these streets were not originally designed to be
8 lined by parked vehicles. Every home has a
9 driveway and a garage, or had a garage, and so
10 when you add the vehicles the roadways are
11 considerably more narrow than what were originally
12 designed in terms of the two-way traffic.

13 In fact, many of the streets where the
14 sidewalks are proposed can't have two-way traffic
15 with cars parked on the street so they're much
16 narrower than originally designed. I would note
17 when we first added sidewalks a sidewalk proposal
18 was approved in 2015 for McKinley Street.

19 The neighborhood association did a
20 survey of -- the Bradmoor Neighborhood
21 Association, not the Huntington Terrace, regarding
22 adding sidewalks to the neighborhood. While it's
23 not a statistically relevant survey everyone who
24 was on the neighborhood list was surveyed, and of
25 the respondents about a third of the neighborhood

1 responded. Ninety percent were in favor and three
2 percent were opposed to sidewalks in general in
3 the Bradmoor neighborhood.

4 So I'd like to say that I very
5 wholeheartedly support all of the sidewalk
6 proposals to make our neighborhood more liveable.
7 I have two requests which I also put in writing.
8 One is -- you've already accommodated which is to
9 place the sidewalk as close to the street as is
10 reasonable in order to limit the impact on the
11 homeowners land, which it appears you've done in
12 most of these because I think with all the parked
13 cars the safety of moving it away from the street
14 is de minimis between having it near the street
15 and having it eight or ten feet into homeowner's
16 land.

17 The other request which was
18 accommodated with the sidewalk request a few years
19 ago is to make the sidewalks slightly narrower. I
20 know this is in variance to the state -- or the
21 county code, but you did it for McKinley, and in
22 order that the sidewalk width is the same -- is
23 contiguous with the rest of the neighborhood where
24 there are sidewalks so the sidewalks look the
25 same.

1 I forget the difference, it's only four
2 or six inches, but to make them the same width as
3 the rest of the existing sidewalks in the
4 neighborhood if the proposal is proposed. So in
5 conclusion based on my experience working with the
6 neighborhood for a number of years I strongly
7 support the sidewalk proposals. Thank you.

8 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. D.H. Michael
9 Bowen.

10 MR. BOWEN: Yes, sir. Thank you. My
11 name is Michael Bowen. I live at 8609 Ewing
12 Drive. I'm a neighbor of Ms. Hirsch and Ms. de
13 Guise and Mr. Pryor. I'm on the same side of the
14 road, on the east side. My comments are
15 specifically on the sidewalk proposed for the east
16 side of Ewing Drive about which you've heard now
17 from I think four people.

18 I'm opposed to it. I'm not opposed to
19 sidewalks in general, and I certainly have
20 sympathy with small children, especially kids
21 attending Bradley Hills where my own children went
22 in the '70s and '80s. I've lived for 50 years,
23 5-0 years, at 8609 Ewing. Respectfully I do
24 oppose the proposition that a sidewalk be built on
25 the east side of Ewing Drive. Some of the reasons

1 you've heard already.

2 Basically as Mr. Pryor indicated I've
3 looked at the comments sent to the county by
4 owners of the houses on both sides of Ewing Drive
5 in this stretch. Of 27 houses in total comments
6 were submitted by 18, 6 were in favor of the
7 construction of this particular sidewalk and 12
8 were opposed.

9 Of the 11 houses on the east side of
10 Ewing -- that's where I live -- that is the side
11 that would be directly impacted by the sidewalk, 2
12 were in favor of the proposal and 7 were opposed.
13 On this basis alone there's a lot of opposition to
14 this particular siding of the sidewalk, and I
15 think that alone should make the county think
16 twice.

17 Secondly, I have a very sound personal
18 reason, some would say a selfish reason for
19 opposing the construction of the sidewalk directly
20 in front of my house. I have a Yoshino cherry
21 tree which I planted in 1984 -- that's 35 years
22 ago -- when the previous Kwansan cherries on the
23 street died. Large mature trees on other
24 properties on the east side of Ewing Drive would
25 have to be removed in order for the sidewalk to be

1 built, too.

2 In my case the cherry tree is 30 feet
3 high and 30 feet wide. It's a huge Kwansan
4 cherry. It's absolutely beautiful in the spring
5 and it's a pain in the forearm when I have to get
6 rid of the leaves. The third reason and the main
7 reason that I think this is an unsound proposal
8 for the east side of Ewing tree is, as people
9 before have said, is the construction of an east
10 side sidewalk instead of enhancing pedestrian
11 safety actually would increase the danger to
12 pedestrians.

13 There's not time for me to go up to the
14 map again and point out as Ms. Hirsch has done so
15 that the Roosevelt Street/Ewing and the McKinley
16 Street/Ewing intersections are very dangerous. I
17 won't go through again everybody who has driven on
18 Ewing Drive, and that's probably everybody here
19 knows that the speed exceeds 25 miles an hour.
20 The county knows that the speeds are not so
21 excessive that they need speed bumps.

22 MR. PAYLOR: You've got about 10
23 seconds.

24 MR. BOWEN: Anyway, the logic says if
25 you're going to build a sidewalk in Ewing Drive

1 build it on the west side because then somebody
2 could walk all the way from Bradley Boulevard up
3 to Folkstone Drive. In fact, they could walk up
4 to Greentree Road, and on the proposed Folkstone
5 Road sidewalk in place there would be a sidewalk
6 all the way between Bradley Boulevard and Bradley
7 Hills here.

8 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Michael.

9 MR. BOWEN: That's logical to me.

10 Thank you.

11 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you so much.

12 Ernesto Cuesta.

13 MR. CUESTA: Hi. My name is Ernesto
14 Cuesta. I live at 8604 Ewing Drive. I've lived
15 there since 1984 -- 1985 with my wife. We have no
16 children, but I'm opposed to the idea of building
17 sidewalks on Ewing Street on either side, and I
18 also have several comments on sidewalks proposed
19 in all of these streets.

20 I find that some of these expenses are
21 unjustified when there's so many other ways to
22 calm the traffic in the area. For example, on
23 Ewing Drive you could install cameras to penalize
24 people that go through the street at high speed.
25 Also at the intersection of Ewing and Roosevelt

1 you could install additional stop signs. Recently
2 I requested a stop sign to be placed at the corner
3 of --

4 MR. PAYLOR: Mr. Cuesta, I apologize,
5 but please direct your comments to the specific
6 project, so if you can talk about the
7 improvements.

8 MR. CUESTA: Well, it pertains to the
9 project.

10 MR. PAYLOR: Huh-uh, not stop signs.

11 MR. CUESTA: Additionally, I oppose the
12 removal of all trees in the area. I think that it
13 is important to preserve the trees. Sidewalks can
14 be -- if the decision is to build sidewalks they
15 should accommodate trees. They should go around
16 trees, not knock down trees. You can go inside of
17 the -- on the house side of the tree or you can go
18 on the street side.

19 There have been some calming devices on
20 Ewing that have protruded part of the side of the
21 street into the -- there's a small extension of
22 the curb onto the street. That could be done to
23 add a place for a sidewalk to protect a tree and
24 not have to cut it down.

25 Okay. I guess that's the main

1 objections that I have, the preservation of trees
2 and the alternative means that are available for
3 calming the traffic on all streets in the
4 neighborhood. Thank you.

5 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Mr. Cuesta.
6 Charles Caramello.

7 MR. CARAMELLO: Thank you. I'm Charles
8 Caramello and I live at 8513 Hempstead Avenue. As
9 a father who raised a daughter in this
10 neighborhood I'm particularly mindful of the
11 safety issue, and I appreciate my neighbors'
12 concerns, and I also very much appreciate the
13 effort that they've put into the sidewalk
14 proposal.

15 In that context I have actually three
16 questions that regard the project. Question one,
17 what are the specifics of the problem being
18 addressed. The problem is unsafe walking
19 conditions, that's predicate, but that seems to me
20 from what I've seen so far based largely on
21 speculation and on a set of conditions like parked
22 cars that are not inherently unsafe.

23 So I'd like to know what data or other
24 measurable evidence that a safety problem exists.
25 It would be very helpful if we could find that.

1 If a problem exists it would also be useful to
2 know what is its extent and what is its variable
3 distribution across Bradmoor. That is to say what
4 does research show on how many, if any, vehicle
5 pedestrian accidents have occurred in Bradmoor
6 since the area was first developed, and if there
7 have been any where have they occurred and what
8 were the specific causes.

9 Question number two, are sidewalks the
10 best solution to this, and they may well be. Do
11 available data demonstrate that sidewalks improve
12 safety in neighborhoods such as ours. If research
13 into Bradmoor history reveals that there have been
14 any vehicle/pedestrian incidents, do statistics
15 for streets without sidewalks differ from those
16 with sidewalks.

17 The same question would apply to
18 research on similar neighborhoods. In short do we
19 know that sidewalks would have a direct bearing on
20 the problem that's presumed to exist. I won't go
21 off on the other because you don't want that.
22 I'll just say that if it's speed, speed bumps
23 might work. If it's parked cars then maybe a
24 uniform parking by permit only would help.

25 Okay. The third question, what is the

1 cost benefit ratio of installing sidewalks.
2 Installation of sidewalks has demonstrable
3 negative consequences to the landscape and the
4 foliage. My question would be are there potential
5 unanticipated consequences.

6 MR. PAYLOR: You have about 20 seconds,
7 sir.

8 MR. CARAMELLO: Decades of renovations
9 and new construction, for example, have resulted
10 in shrunken back yards so front yards have become
11 a primary play space. What are the safety
12 implications of reducing this space. I'll stop
13 with that. They may well be the best solution to
14 a problem. I would just want to see a more
15 evidence based argument for what the exact nature
16 of the problem is and what the best solution for
17 addressing that problem is. Thank you.

18 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Richard Holt.

19 MR. HOLT: My name is Richard Holt. My
20 wife and I moved in 2007 to 8509 Ewing Drive in
21 Bethesda. As noted in our E-mail of May 24, 2019
22 to the MCDOT we are opposed to a sidewalk in front
23 of our home. I endorse the comments made by the
24 two gentlemen and the two ladies who live on Ewing
25 Drive that testified before me.

1 I understand it would have a
2 significant impact on the size of our yard, but
3 more importantly it would put pedestrians and at
4 times their animals very close to our home which
5 would affect our sense of privacy and security in
6 the home.

7 In addition, the county requires snow
8 removal from sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians
9 in wheelchairs within 24 hours even if the home
10 owner is out of town. We are both in our 70s and
11 one of us is handicapped. The prospect of
12 clearing snow each winter to accommodate
13 pedestrians in wheelchairs on a sidewalk is
14 daunting. We may also have liabilities for
15 accidents due to a defect in clearing the
16 sidewalks. Thank you very much.

17 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. David Shiff.

18 MR. SHIFF: I have some graphics here.
19 I don't know if -- can I put them up here?
20 Forgive me. (Inaudible) so people can come and
21 look at them.

22 MR. PAYLOR: Should we?

23 MR. SHIFF: I didn't hear his comment,
24 I'm sorry. My name is David Shiff. I own the
25 home at 8510 Garfield Street where I've lived for

1 31 years. My property is on the southwest corner
2 of Garfield and McKinley, and it's within the
3 boundaries of Huntington Terrace, not Bradmoor.

4 I'm fully supportive of pedestrian
5 safety and deployment of new sidewalks where
6 they're needed. I'm also a strong advocate of our
7 community's trees and the environment. One of the
8 primary reasons I bought my house in 1988 was the
9 wooded character of the neighborhood and the
10 spectacular trees on my lot, most significantly
11 the 80-foot spruce tree that is slated to be cut
12 down for this project.

13 The issue I have with the project as
14 currently planned is that it includes coverage in
15 at least one location that I don't believe is
16 needed, and in some locations where it is needed
17 and there's conflict with the existing trees I
18 don't think there's been sufficient or a
19 comprehensive effort to come up with a solution
20 for the sidewalks and the trees to cohabitate to
21 the fullest using innovative construction
22 techniques, alternate routing, et cetera.

23 The net of these issues is the project
24 as currently planned at least for my easement is
25 it's causing loss of more trees than necessary and

1 at the same time maybe more costly than it needs
2 to be. In my particular case the segment of
3 sidewalk proposed for my right of way involves
4 removing four trees, more than any other single
5 residence in this project.

6 One of these trees is the 40-foot
7 diameter 80-foot spruce I mentioned earlier which
8 I'm told by my arborist is one of the tallest
9 Norway spruces in the entire county. Another is a
10 large and very unique species of Japanese maple
11 that is extraordinary. The spruce tree is visible
12 from many blocks in all directions, for many
13 blocks in all directions surrounding the tree.

14 There's simply no way in any one's
15 lifetime that the visual impact and the
16 environmental contribution that these trees
17 provide could ever be duplicated with the DOT's,
18 quote, replacement trees. Besides the aesthetic
19 and environmental beauty that these trees provide,
20 they also contribute significantly to the
21 neighborhood property values and my property alone
22 will probably suffer 10 to 15,000 dollars in
23 reduced property value with the loss of these
24 trees.

25 I want to emphasize that the two trees

1 in particular, there are four, but the spruce and
2 the maple, the maple is entirely on my property
3 and the spruce is about 80 percent on my property.
4 It straddles the lot line. Most important and
5 most confounding, as I said, is that the segment
6 of sidewalk planned for my easement is simply not
7 needed.

8 Other speakers mentioned that there are
9 other routes in the neighborhood that will allow
10 people to travel east to west and along much less
11 traveled roadways and much safer than putting this
12 segment along McKinley Street which is a very busy
13 street.

14 MR. PAYLOR: You have about 10 seconds,
15 sir.

16 MR. SHIFF: I think in summary here
17 that the situation has been especially frustrating
18 to me because I just haven't seen the effort to
19 explore how to put sidewalks in a way that won't
20 cause the loss of these trees.

21 For example, ADA requires only three
22 feet, yet we're planning five-foot sidewalks is
23 one example. There are restrictions on three-foot
24 sidewalks, but I don't think they're prohibitive.
25 I implore the county to drop this segment from the

1 project.

2 It's not required to support the
3 project's objectives because there are alternate
4 routes. The loss of trees on my property that
5 will result is -- will be an irrevocable travesty.

6 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Thank you,
7 sir.

8 MR. SHIFF: Thank you.

9 MR. PAYLOR: And please be reminded
10 that you can submit your comments in written
11 format and they will be considered with the same
12 weight as the oral testimony, so you don't have to
13 feel like you have to say everything. You can
14 write in and it will be considered equally, so
15 thank you. Next is Paul Wolfe.

16 MR. WOLFE: Good evening. My name is
17 Paul Wolfe. I live at 1981 Lancaster Drive in
18 Potomac, Maryland. Obviously I don't live in the
19 neighborhood. In real life I'm an arborist. We
20 take care of trees, and what I find interesting
21 about this discussion is that we seem to have
22 trees on one side and sidewalks on the other side,
23 and the solution that the county has suggested is
24 concrete five feet wide.

25 I'm suggesting that there are

1 alternatives that there can be the best of both
2 possible worlds. We could still have safe
3 walkways for children to get to school and we
4 still could have trees, and it just requires a
5 little bit of innovative thinking on the part of
6 those who are in charge of this project.

7 For instance, down on Little Falls
8 Parkway which many people travel they had a
9 serious accident a couple of years ago where the
10 biker was killed crossing the road. What they did
11 was they created pylons along the edge of the
12 street so that there's a separation between
13 traffic and the people.

14 You could easily do that on several of
15 these streets. You could look at, for instance,
16 parking only on one side of the street because
17 there's concerns that people have to get -- you
18 know, that cars are out on the street. You could
19 suggest that there be parking only on one side of
20 the street. You could look at doing one-way
21 streets so that there are less cars going on those
22 streets.

23 When I was looking at a tree recently
24 in the community I noted one car went by in 10
25 minutes. I'm looking at what the traffic looks

1 like. I'm wondering also if the county has done
2 an environmental impact statement of what it would
3 be like to take down 32 trees, what that would be
4 on the canopy cover which is so important nowadays
5 as climate is changing, the canopy covers in
6 communities and what that's going to do on the
7 effect or adverse effect of the community.

8 You know, as I say I'm all in favor of
9 sidewalks. I'm all in favor of trees. I'd like
10 to think a little outside the box and come up with
11 a solution that may not be right for everybody,
12 everyone may have to do a little compromising, but
13 at the end of the day you'd have what you want and
14 be able to move on.

15 Thank you very much. If there's any
16 questions I'd be able -- I'd like to answer them
17 for you if I can be of assistance in any other
18 way. Thank you.

19 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Brooke
20 Anthony.

21 MS. ANTHONY: Thank you for letting me
22 speak. I'm Brooke Anthony. I live at 8714
23 Rayburn Road, and I too am very concerned about
24 the tree situation because I stand to lose three
25 trees which takes away a lot of my privacy, my

1 yard, and I have lived in my home for 23 years and
2 when I bought it the trees were the main
3 attraction, the main reason that I bought the
4 property, because I really liked having a lot of
5 trees.

6 And I notice every morning that, you
7 know, there are children walking to the bus stop
8 which is on the -- let's see -- northeast corner
9 now of Bradmoor and Folkstone and they all walk
10 along the north side, and I know they're not going
11 to walk over to the south side to use the sidewalk
12 and then cross back over because we were all
13 children once and we know that that's the way it
14 is.

15 And most of the children around me do
16 not -- the ones who are attending Bradley Hills do
17 not walk to school. Their parents take them.
18 School starts at 9 o'clock and at 8:55 the parade
19 of cars goes up Folkstone to drop the children
20 while the parents go off to work, and I was also
21 the administrative secretary here in the school
22 for 23 years.

23 So I know a little bit about the
24 situation with the children not walking to school,
25 and I also worry about, as Mr. Holt said, about

1 snow removal. I mean, at the present time I can
2 cope with it. Another 10 or 15 years it might be
3 very difficult, so I'd like maybe to have you
4 consider the sidewalk being put on the north side
5 of Folkstone. Thank you.

6 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Brooke.
7 Stephanie Mantelmacher -- did I get that right --
8 and Alexandra, I gather.

9 MS. MANTELMACHER: And Alexandra, yes.
10 Hi. I'm Stephanie Mantelmacher and this is
11 Alexandra Mantelmacher. We live at 8601
12 Hempstead. We are in full support of sidewalks,
13 specifically Hempstead between, what is it,
14 McKinley and Hartsdale. That is the most
15 dangerous section of road in the morning going to
16 school that you can possibly imagine.

17 There are cars parked on both sides of
18 the street. Every car is from Bradley Hills after
19 drop-off. So what happens is cars are forced onto
20 Folkstone which is why they're lining up on
21 Folkstone. They're forced onto Folkstone to drive
22 up to the car drop-off area.

23 Then they are forced to turn right,
24 which it's a no left turn. They're forced to turn
25 right and they must go down Hempstead. They have

1 no other way to get where they're going, so the
2 carpool and the parents that are driving are
3 driving down Hempstead and we are trying to get
4 around the cars and there's no other way for us to
5 get there, no other way.

6 We cannot take the pathway through the
7 park from the other, what is that, Garfield.
8 There's no other way to do it. What would you
9 like to say?

10 CHILD ALEXANDRA: I am allowed to walk
11 to school by myself, but it's too dangerous to
12 without a sidewalk. I don't feel comfortable
13 doing it.

14 MS. MANTELMACHER: And Bradley Hills is
15 growing and we recently completed an addition at
16 the school. There's a lot of children. There's
17 more children moving in every day. You see houses
18 that more children are moving in, and it's just
19 not safe. Ewing isn't safe, none of these streets
20 are safe for children to walk. It's that simple,
21 right? Okay. Good job.

22 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, ladies.

23 MS. MANTELMACHER: Oh, last thing, last
24 thing. I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I'm wearing this
25 little sticker. The school promotes walk to

1 school. The county, the state promotes walk to
2 school, stickers for walking to school.

3 Here's a, you know, E-mail from the
4 police, from Montgomery County travel on the
5 sidewalks, walk, walk, walk, walk, walk,
6 Halloween, please walk on the sidewalks.
7 Everybody is promoting walking to school and
8 walking on the sidewalks but we don't have
9 sidewalks.

10 MR. PAYLOR: Okay. Thank you.

11 MS. MANTELMACHER: That's it.

12 (Applause.)

13 MR. PAYLOR: Julliet Hoopes.

14 MS. HOOPES: Hi. Good evening. I'm
15 Julliet Hoopes. I live at 8610 Ewing Drive.
16 Thank you all for being here in our neighborhood.
17 As I said, I'm Julliet Hoopes and I'm currently
18 the sidewalk chair of the Bradmoor Neighborhood
19 Association, and I've been involved in traffic
20 safety for the neighborhood for years. I've lived
21 here about eight years.

22 Further, I'm an active member of the
23 school community at Bradley Hills. I've been on
24 the PTA board for five years now, and I've also
25 been involved in the process of submitting this

1 application over the last two years, so thank you
2 so much again for the attention that you've given
3 this application.

4 I'm here tonight to support my street,
5 Ewing Drive, sidewalks on both sides. Of the
6 street segments considered Ewing is by far one of
7 the more heavily traveled by cars in the
8 neighborhood. There are close to 1700 cars per
9 day on Ewing as per your traffic study done last
10 year, and it's being used as a mean cut-through
11 from Bradley Boulevard to -- and Greentree.

12 So with limited visibility and the
13 steep hill, parked cars, high speeds, uneven yards
14 to walk through even if we walk on lawns I really
15 feel like it's only a matter of time before
16 someone really gets hurt. As many of the other
17 families on Ewing, I know several, we walk to
18 school every day to and from.

19 My husband commutes every day using the
20 bus walking on Ewing Drive every day. Especially
21 now that it's dark he has to walk in the dark in
22 the street and we walk our dog, we exercise, and
23 we use Ewing every day. There are many valid
24 reasons for sidewalks, but obviously I'm using my
25 testimony tonight to highlight the sidewalks for

1 the safety of our children.

2 And there's no denying as we've said
3 tonight that this neighborhood is changing over
4 rapidly. Just in the time I've submitted the
5 application on Ewing there's two new houses that
6 have been renovated and that are going to be up --
7 one's been up for sale and the second may be, too,
8 I'm not sure, and as a result there are actually
9 close to -- I talked with the principal last --
10 this fall and there's close to 200 walkers and
11 plenty walk to school, bike to school daily, and
12 they're all mostly walking through the streets of
13 Bradmoor.

14 These 200 children are not provided bus
15 service by the school system so they're forced to
16 walk or -- and therefore I respectfully ask that
17 you provide the safe streets for them to walk on,
18 including Ewing. I also know that our school and
19 our parents support sidewalks. I have a -- I
20 submitted with the application a letter from Karen
21 Caroscio, the current principal, and also our PTA
22 president Becky Trent who is in full support.

23 MR. PAYLOR: You have about 10 seconds,
24 ma'am.

25 MS. HOOPES: Okay. And then finally

1 I'm sure you're aware of the Safe Routes to School
2 as Stephanie had mentioned too which promotes
3 walking, so if nothing else if there's a lot of
4 opposition on the east side for Ewing if the west
5 side would be considered I would be fully in
6 support of either side, so thank you very much.

7 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Ms. Hoopes.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. PAYLOR: William Blackwelder.

10 William Blackwelder. Thank you.

11 MR. BLACKWELDER: Good evening. I'm
12 William Blackwelder, 8613 Hempstead Avenue, and
13 I'm speaking to request a couple of amendments to
14 the proposal. I've written about these before and
15 I assume my written comments will be considered
16 already, but the biggest problem is the impact on
17 our property and a neighbor's at 8611 of having
18 the sidewalk go behind the pole, power pole and
19 fire hydrant.

20 I believe there's room for it to go in
21 front. That is closer to the street, and we'd
22 very much like for you to consider doing that and
23 some time ago, probably over a year now when there
24 was a county representative in the neighborhood
25 and we were speaking to him he said that would be

1 possible. He indicated that would be possible,
2 and so I'd appreciate it if you'd consider that.

3 The other thing -- and by the way, I've
4 spoken to my neighbor about it. I don't think
5 he's here, but he's certainly in agreement with
6 that as well and I'll encourage him to submit a
7 written comment about it. The other thing is we
8 would propose having the sidewalk four feet wide
9 instead of five feet wide with perhaps a foot of
10 green space. That would certainly have less
11 impact on our property, but would be the size of
12 the existing sidewalk on Hempstead Avenue.

13 And finally my wife and I walk on
14 McKinley a lot and the block between Garfield and
15 Hempstead, and we feel there is a safety need
16 there. Cars go fast on McKinley because there's
17 no stop sign for a couple or three blocks there so
18 maybe a stop sign would help, but at any rate cars
19 go fast and we would like for that block to be
20 safer.

21 I don't care which side of the street.
22 There's an existing sidewalk on part of the
23 street, part of that block, and I certainly would
24 hope you could do it without cutting trees down,
25 old trees down, but it would be very good to have

1 that block be safer for walkers. Thank you.

2 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. That concludes
3 the speakers who have expressed an interest in
4 speaking tonight. Is there anyone else who did
5 not sign in as a speaker who now wishes to speak?
6 You, my friend, please. If you don't mind please
7 state your name and your address.

8 MR. ACHARYA: Yes. My name is Arun
9 Acharya. For disclosure I now live on South Vic,
10 but when I sent the E-mail back in May I used to
11 live on Ewing Drive, and Ms. Main said it was a
12 passionate and well written plea, so I decided to
13 read it. She said it's okay to read it even
14 though I moved out of the street.

15 So anyway, I'll read the E-mail
16 essentially. We are very excited about the fact
17 that a sidewalk for our area on Ewing Drive is
18 finally being seriously considered. We have had
19 this home for nearly 12 years. The fact is when
20 we moved in our two kids were the only ones on the
21 street.

22 Even though we have moved away they
23 have been -- and those kids are now too old to
24 trick or treat on Halloween they have been
25 replaced by at least six other small kids on the

1 same street. Most people are moving into the area
2 because of the schools and they're coming with
3 little kids.

4 Even those that are buying the
5 McMansions that are replacing houses like the one
6 I had are coming in with kids. A few years ago
7 actually I started an informal petition on Ewing
8 Drive for exactly this. During that time a
9 neighbor bluntly told me, quote, why do we need
10 this anymore, the kids are gone, end quote. What
11 she actually meant was that it was her kids that
12 were gone --

13 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Yes.

14 MR. ACHARYA: -- and she did not need a
15 sidewalk anymore. Unfortunately that type of
16 resident living there for nearly 30 years or more
17 and already seeing their kids grown and gone
18 typifies nearly -- the majority of the opposition,
19 especially from what I can see today. Most if not
20 all of those residents in that area will be gone
21 in a very few years.

22 Unfortunately they're refusing to take
23 a look at the trend and the needs of the
24 neighborhood for years to come and for some reason
25 they want resistance to what the needs of the

1 future to be their legacy. Those that stubbornly
2 oppose the effort see very young kids moving in
3 and having to ride their little bikes right on the
4 street because there is no other option.

5 They see that -- pet owners and drivers
6 having to dodge each other even in the dark of
7 night or in the dark of winter. They don't really
8 seem to care. Worst of all, they seem to be
9 oblivious of the fact that the main reason they
10 themselves do not walk on Ewing Drive is not
11 because of their health or ability, but because
12 they know themselves that it's unsafe to do so.

13 Now --

14 MR. PAYLOR: You have about 15 seconds,
15 sir.

16 MR. ACHARYA: How much time?

17 MR. PAYLOR: Fifteen seconds.

18 MR. ACHARYA: Okay. Now, a major
19 infrastructure project like a sidewalk is not done
20 for only the needs of today. It is an investment
21 investing in both today and for years to come,
22 decades or even generations. The fast growing
23 demographics of the street, the neighborhood and
24 Bethesda in general requires that we plan for what
25 we need. Bethesda needs a younger generation to

1 move in unless it wants to become a ghost town on
2 Halloween that it has always been.

3 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, sir.

4 MR. ACHARYA: The city -- county must
5 go forward and build it for both now and for the
6 future. Thank you for taking this seriously.

7 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

8 MR. ACHARYA: Cheers.

9 MR. PAYLOR: Please be reminded to
10 state your name and address for the record.

11 MR. D'ANGELO: My name is Christopher
12 D'Angelo. I live at 8508 Hempstead Avenue. I
13 have three young children age nine, five and
14 three. We moved here in August of 2016 from
15 Montreal, Canada.

16 The primary driving force for us to
17 move to this area was this elementary school and
18 the middle school and high schools in the area,
19 which I think I'm not alone in a lot of the people
20 coming into the neighborhood are coming here for
21 the schools and it's very hard, I echo from what
22 -- some of the things that my neighbors said in
23 the past.

24 Walking to school on Hempstead you've
25 got cars on both sides, there's no sidewalks and

1 all of the traffic is funneling onto that street,
2 and typically what happens is once kids or parents
3 drop off their kids they're doing their best to
4 get to work. It's an 8:45 drop-off, people start
5 work at 9:00 and they're doing their best to maybe
6 go a bit too fast down those streets, so it's a
7 safety hazard for our kids.

8 I've got -- they're all out of
9 strollers, my kids at nine, five and three right
10 now, so I've got one in my hand, one holding my
11 hand and one walking on his own, and there's no
12 room from my house at 8508 all the way up to
13 Hartsdale where that sidewalk now starts towards
14 the school.

15 So again I echo the -- you see what's
16 going on in the neighborhood. You walk around and
17 houses are being demolished. Much larger houses
18 are being built. These houses that are being
19 built are not for one person, two person
20 residents. These are houses for families and
21 you're going to see more and more families coming
22 into this neighborhood.

23 A lot of them are working in the D.C.
24 area. D.C. is growing. It's one of the number
25 one influx of people of millennials. Those

1 millennials are eventually going to have children
2 and move out. We're going to continue to see an
3 influx of people coming into this area, and thus a
4 continued reason to require sidewalks for the
5 safety of these children. Thank you very much.

6 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you, Christopher.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. BERTIN: Good evening. My name is
9 Erik Bertin. I live at 8607 Hempstead Avenue.
10 I've lived there since 2011. I'm the father of
11 two children, ages seven and nine. I want to echo
12 everything that Chris just said.

13 I also walk to school along with Chris
14 and Ms. Mantelmacher, and I would submit that
15 Hempstead between McKinley and Hartsdale is the
16 joke point of this neighborhood. You have parents
17 that are driving down Hempstead onto Hartsdale to
18 get to the -- to drop their kids off to school.

19 That's only one of two routes to get to
20 the part where you can drive your kids to school,
21 and then as Stephanie said when they're -- after
22 they're done dropping their kids off as Chris said
23 parents are often in a hurry to get to work and
24 then come barreling down Hempstead in the other
25 direction.

1 It's very ironic that as I'm going to
2 school the most dangerous time is then when -- and
3 the danger is oftentimes from other parents who,
4 you know, aren't in a hurry to get to school and
5 to get back. On that stretch of the street there
6 are only three houses that have garages. Cars are
7 routinely parked on both sides of the road, so
8 that's an issue that others have pointed out.

9 I also wanted to echo the points that
10 Jed Meline and Mr. Blackwelder made that I think
11 some of the concerns about the residents about the
12 sort of aesthetic appeal of the neighborhood can
13 easily be addressed and I would fully support
14 siting the sidewalk closer to the street. I think
15 that's perfectly adequate for safety.

16 I think that having a sidewalk that is
17 not the full five feet that is being proposed is
18 perfectly acceptable. Five feet seems to me
19 excessive and a four-foot wide sidewalk that is
20 consistent with the rest of the neighborhood would
21 be perfectly fine, and I also fully support Mr.
22 Blackwelder's request to site the sidewalk in
23 front of the fire hydrant and in front of the
24 telephone pole as well. I'm very sympathetic to
25 his concerns regarding the value of his property.

1 Lastly, I would just point out that
2 it's not just during the school day that we're
3 walking. My in-laws live on Bradmoor Drive. I'm
4 walking over to their house at any hour of the
5 day. I'm also a gardener. I'm the community
6 gardener.

7 I work very hard, long hours.
8 Oftentimes the only time I can go is 10 o'clock,
9 11 o'clock at night so I can be out on the street
10 walking in the middle of the street where there is
11 no sidewalk literally at almost any hour of the
12 day. And with respect to my neighbors who are
13 expressing concern about snow removal I would
14 simply point out that there are many children who
15 live in this neighborhood who are entrepreneurial
16 and who are more than willing for a fee to shovel
17 snow. Thank you.

18 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

19 (Applause.)

20 MR. ROSENWEIG: Hi. I'm David
21 Rosenweig. I'm at 8517 Rayburn Road, which is a
22 part of the segment on the south side of McKinley
23 between Rayburn and Bradmoor that's under
24 consideration, and I support the proposal.

25 I just wanted to add a couple of

1 comments. I think I'm the second person in the
2 room that attended Bradley Hills, and the traffic
3 volume compared to several decades ago is a lot
4 higher now than it used to be. It used to be much
5 safer to walk in the streets here. There's just a
6 lot more car volume.

7 I think there are more people, and GPS
8 I think has changed that. The GPS routes people
9 from the beltway up Rayburn and onto McKinley to
10 get to old Georgetown. It's kind of a big
11 cut-through and there are no sidewalks on McKinley
12 as a lot of people have talked about.

13 The second thing people have talked
14 about, there are segments in the neighborhood with
15 low pedestrian traffic, so why build a sidewalk.
16 I can say as a pedestrian I avoid the segments
17 that don't have sidewalks. I sort of often will
18 go on a more circuitous route that's longer
19 specifically to avoid the areas that don't have
20 sidewalks because it's dangerous to walk on them.

21 So I think if you build it people may
22 come, and then thirdly there's an effort called
23 the Bradley Hills Village Program. I'm surprised
24 actually they don't have a representative here
25 tonight. It's about aging in place. There's a

1 county initiative to encourage people to age in
2 place, and I know we've talked a lot about kids,
3 lots of concerns for kids that are very justified,
4 but also for older people their hearing is not as
5 good.

6 They can't tell when there's a car
7 coming, they're not as quick to jump out of the
8 way if they have to move quickly and, you know, I
9 worry about my parents walking in the
10 neighborhood. They're scared often, you know,
11 especially at rush hour to go out into the street,
12 so I think kids are certainly a concern and also
13 our older folks I think are a concern. That's all
14 I've got. Thank you.

15 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you.

16 MS. ASSIRYANI: Hi. My name is Rima
17 Assiryani. I live on Folkstone Road. I love
18 trees and that's one of the things that also
19 attracted us when we moved to the neighborhood
20 back in 2014, so I encourage us all to do
21 everything we can to preserve, especially the big
22 trees that are monumental in our neighborhood, and
23 in my case we live on a corner unit so the
24 sidewalk area that needs to be cleared of snow
25 practically doubles for us.

1 However, I also think that sidewalks
2 make neighborhoods more attractive and possibly
3 increase the values of homes from at least what I
4 see when I go around looking for homes. My kids
5 are out of elementary school. They're in high
6 school, but I have an elderly who lives at home
7 with us and like our neighbor Mr. Kevorkian
8 mentioned and other neighbors it's very difficult
9 for her to even go on a walk these days. To take
10 her out of the house and have to cross the street
11 from my house to the sidewalk to start our walk is
12 a chore, so I support the sidewalk project.

13 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you very much. Is
14 there anyone else who did not sign in?

15 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: Question,
16 may I can ask a question?

17 MR. PAYLOR: No, sir. Now, if you want
18 to talk afterwards we can speak with you. If you
19 would like to speak, please.

20 MS. KAIBNI: Yes. I live in the
21 neighborhood since 1973. I aged with the
22 neighborhood. I saw the neighborhood school was
23 almost going to close. It didn't have enough
24 children. All of us, we were all scared because
25 they said that instead of the school it would be a

1 parking lot for the buses of the school.

2 All of a sudden this influx of young
3 people came with small children, and it's a
4 beautiful neighborhood and the children need
5 safety, but so do we. I like to walk. My husband
6 likes to walk. We walk a lot along Ewing.
7 Somebody said that two and a half people were
8 counted that were walking on Ewing.

9 Well, my husband and I are two.
10 Someplace here is the other half. I like to walk
11 to Bethesda. It's almost impossible to park
12 downtown Bethesda. We are two miles from
13 Bethesda, maybe a little bit more than two miles.
14 We could all walk to Bethesda and not use our
15 cars, so I am a sidewalk person.

16 I was born in another country. Even
17 the smallest town have sidewalks. My mother was
18 born most probably in the smallest city in
19 Germany. It was so small that it doesn't even
20 appear on the German maps, sidewalks everywhere.
21 I -- if it were up to me I would put sidewalks
22 from here to Washington so that we could walk to
23 Washington.

24 MR. PAYLOR: Before you go could you
25 state your name for the record?

1 MS. KAIBNI: Yes, I'm Eva Kaibni. I
2 live on 6009 Folkstone Road.

3 MR. PAYLOR: Thank you. Is there
4 anyone else who did -- who signed in or who did
5 not sign in and who would like to speak at this
6 time? Do you want to grab the mic? I was going
7 to do that.

8 Thank you all for your comments who
9 have expressed an interest -- excuse me. I'm
10 sorry. Thank you all for your comments. Seeing
11 that everyone who wishes to speak has had an
12 opportunity to do so, this concludes the oral
13 testimony portion of this public hearing.

14 The record -- excuse me. The record
15 will remain open for comments for three weeks
16 closing on November 27th, 2019 at 6:00 p.m.
17 Additional written testimony may be submitted by
18 fax, E-mail or regular mail and must be received
19 or postmarked by the close of this hearing record.

20 Submissions should be sent to Lori
21 Main, Annual Sidewalk Program, Division of
22 Transportation and Engineering, MCDOT, 100 Edison
23 Park Drive, fourth floor, Gaithersburg, Maryland,
24 20878, fax number 240-777-7277 or by E-mail at
25 dte.sidewalk@montgomerycountymd.gov.

1 Again, Lori's contact information is
2 available at the sign-in table. Thank you and
3 this public hearing is now concluded.

4 UNIDENTIFIED MALE SPEAKER: You don't
5 take any questions?

6 MR. PAYLOR: We can now.

7 MR. CUPPLES: We can now. This is
8 about listening first and foremost.

9 (The Recorded Hearing was concluded at
10 8:39 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

I, Jonathan Bortolini, the officer
before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken,
do hereby certify that said proceedings were
electronically recorded by me; and that I am
neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by
any of the parties to this case and have no
interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

Jonathan Bortolini

Jonathan Bortolini, Court Reporter

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I, Bonnie K. Panek, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the recorded proceedings; that said proceedings were transcribed to the best of my ability from the audio recording and supporting information; and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

Bonnie K. Panek

BONNIE K. PANEK

Transcript of Public Hearing
 Conducted on November 6, 2019

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